Cuverville

Back from Paris, I went up to bed at nine o'clock. The others continued their evening downstairs. Gerard, seated with Mile R. on the bench under my window, kept me awake for a long time; then the games they got under way in the drawing-room; I was not annoyed by this noise, but I was glad to be alone. I did not mind even the vague hum that came from the drawing-room. The only thing that provoked me was the sudden sound of Gerard's voice, rising above the others, harsh and without overtones.

Copeau was amazed to find that I was still in the midst of Stendhal's *Journal.* There are certain writers that I read as slowly as possible. It seems to me that I am conversing with them, that they talk to me, and I should be sorry not to be able to keep them with me longer.

13

August

Right after S*. *Yves* I took up *The Ebb Tide,* then *The Wrong Box,* which I finished today. This last one, which begins in the manner of Dickens and recalls in its best chapters *The Wrecker* or *The Suicide Club,* ends with a rather ordinary piece of humbug. You can't get into *The Ebb Tide* until after the first hundred pages, but suddenly it becomes excellent and remains so almost to the end. In *St. Jves I* liked the *innocence* of the emotions. Today I begin *Kidnapped.*[23]

14

August

Gerard has introduced baccarat here; from nine thirty to ten thirty these last few evenings the quiet atmosphere of Cuverville has been corrupted. Yesterday I held the bank, with a fiendish luck. It rather amuses me to win *against* Gerard. But I should have preferred to win only from him.

Gourmont has published in the *Ermitage* of 15 July some new *"Pas sur le sable."*[24]* He certainly hasn't very beautiful feetS

"There are certain things one must have the courage *not* to write/* says the first of his aphorisms; this first one ought to spare us many others; we should like him to be more "courageous/*

"Rise above yourself to contemplate yourself/* he writes immediately afterward. This is because he doesn't seem handsome to himself seen full-face; he hopes to be better in a bird's-eye view. From sentence to sentence he remains ugly; when he talks of women he does so as a repulsive man who has been repulsed and who is taking his revenge,

[2S] Books by Stevenson. [A.I Gide quotes the titles in French,

[24] "Footprints in the Sand."